Distance and Proximity

Photographic works by

Bernd and Hilla Becher

Andreas Gursky

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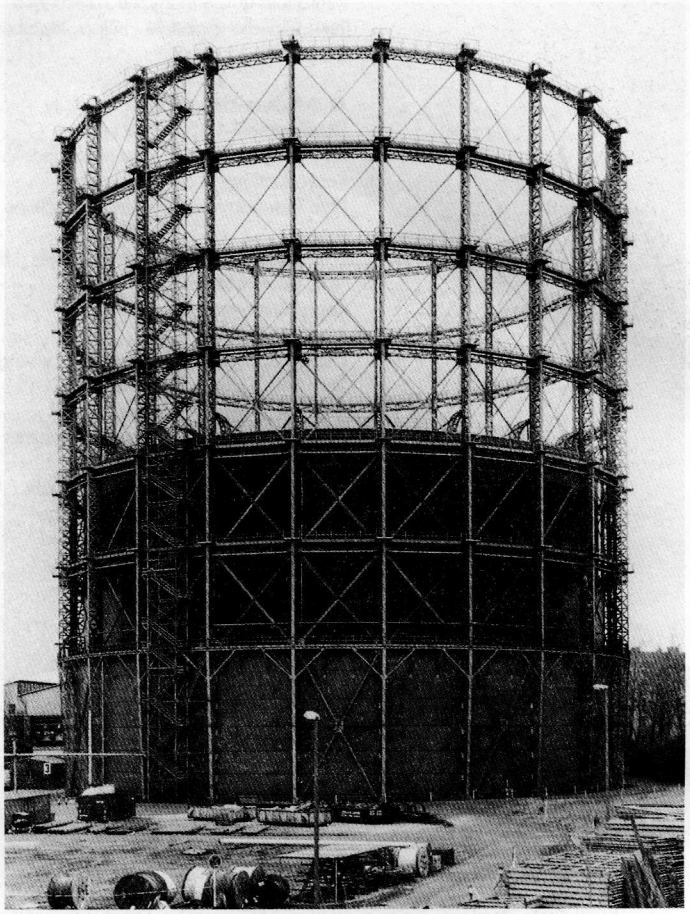

Exhibition Series

Photography in Germany

From 1850 Until Today

Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen

Distance and Proximity

Photographic works by
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Conception
Wulf Herzogenrath
Berlin

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Axel Hütte, Simone Nieweg,
Thomas Ruff, Jörg Sasse,
Thomas Struth, Petra Wunderlich,
Text: Wulf Herzogenrath, Berlin
Originals

"Reports on the State of Affairs"
German Photography from the Fifties
to the Eighties in East and West
Text: Wulf Herzogenrath,
Janos Frecot, Ulrich Domröse
Originals

Portraiture in Germany 1850 – 1918
Text: Claudia Gabriele Philipp, Hamburg
Originals

Architecture Photography and City
Development 1850 – 1914
Text: Viktoria Schmidt-Linsenhoff, Frankfurt
Reproductions of originals
from German museums and collections

Photography in German magazines 1883 – 1923
Text: Bernd Weise, Berlin
Reproductions of originals

Photography as Art in Germany around 1900
Text: Fritz Kempe, Hamburg
Reproductions of originals
from German museums and collections

Photography in the Weimar Republic
Text: Herbert Molderings, Cologne
Mostly new prints from existing old
negatives in collaboration with the
artists or the curator of their estate

Bauhaus Photography
Text: Wulf Herzogenrath, Berlin
In collaboration with the artists or
the curators of their estates
Original prints or reproduction
photography

German Advertising Photography 1925 – 1988
Text: Manfred Schmalriede, Neulingen
Reproductions from magazine copies

Photography in German Magazines 1924 – 1933
Text: Ute Eskildsen, Essen
Reproductions in original size from
magazine copies at the
Institut für Zeitungsforschung, Dortmund

"subjective photography"
The German Contribution 1948 – 1963
Text: J. A. Schmoll alias Eisenwerth, Munich
Originals or prints from original negatives

Artists Use Photography
Text: Wulf Herzogenrath, Berlin
Originals

Preface

Hermann Pollig
Barbara Barsch
Bernd Burock

While introducing different photographic concepts and stylistic tendencies in the individual exhibitions, this series on the history of German photography that was conceptualized by Wulf Herzogenrath and the Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen (ifa), thematizes important aspects of this technical-artistic medium in separate exhibitions.

"Distance and Proximity" is dedicated to the keen and exacting vision of Bernd and Hilla Becher and those photo artists, former students of their class at the Düsseldorf Academy of Art, who were inspired by them.

We would like to thank Wulf Herzogenrath, the participating photographers as well as the galleries Johnen & Schöttle, Cologne, Max Hetzler, Cologne, Konrad Fischer, Düsseldorf, and Wilma Tolksdorf, Hamburg, for having generously supported the realization of this exhibition.

Distance and Proximity [1]

Wulf Herzogenrath

Photo-Typologies of Anonymous Industrial Buildings

The Work and the Influence of Bernd and Hilla Becher

There are three different strands that come together in the work of Bernd and Hilla Becher and build something magnificently new: first, the photography as a medium of documentational artistic action; secondly, typology, the pictorial sequence, the series, and, thus, pictorial comparison as the principle of their work; and, finally, the architectural, functional, and, at once, historic-economic content of their photographs: the various architectures and large, functionally designed objects that belong to a fleeting world of heavy industry and mines with their blast furnaces; cooling towers; water towers; winding towers; gas-holders; silos; plants as well as objects in urban areas in addition to the other major topic, the family houses. The world the Bechers depict on their photos is limited by time and functionally determined; it remained more or less unnoticed until far into the eighties. These objects from the world of work had been rarely recognized, i.e. only when they were built in a specific stylistic form (Art Nouveau, the modernism of the twenties or fifties). The work of Bernd and Hilla Becher does not call for the preservation of each and every one of these buildings and objects; it attempts to take the most complete and objective inventory of a world that has almost gone by, and this with good reason because it is functionally no longer useful. "We do not intend to make relics out of these old industrial buildings, but we want to create a more or less complete sequence of their various manifestations." [2]

Thus, the rapidity with which no longer needed objects disappeared became the trigger for Bernd (at that time Bernhard) Becher's 1957 transformation from a draftsman to the photographer of industrial witnesses in his native Siegerland, since some of the objects he had drawn were already missing at the time of his next visit.

Bernd Becher had been impressed by the woodcuts in old encyclopaedias because of their precision, but photography made it possible to depict this much faster and with more faithfulness to the details. The tablets, put together with several photos around 1957, represent a preliminary stage. But in the fall of 1958, he saw the photo collages of the Dadaists, especially Paul Citroen's "Metropolis", at the extensive Dada exhibition at the Düsseldorf Kunstverein. However, he did not wish to compare himself with this artistic form; whatever he wanted to combine in a collage, had to be put next to one another and clearly recognizable. Thus, he kept taking photos from the distance in order to examine antumn things closely.

Hilla Becher (born Wobeser) started to take photographs when she was 13 and refers to her mother who was trained as a photographer at the Berlin Lette School. She served as an apprentice of Walter Eichgrün, a third or fourth generation professional photographer, with whom she took photographs of the residences and gardens of Sanssouci. There, she also studied the basics of architectural photography, but was more drawn to landscape photography. In 1959, she collaborated with Bernd Becher for the first time when they photographed the mine "Alte Burg" (Old Castle) in the Siegerland from all four sides.

Their interest in these industrial motives, in "anonymous" designs, in an "architecture without architects" was reaffirmed through the catalogue to the much-regarded travelling exhibition of the Museum of Modern Art in New York [with this title], that was organized by Bernhard Rudofsky in 1964. There, the focus on foreign, "primitive" civilizations was to teach us "that the philosophy and know-how of the anonymous architect was the largest, not yet tapped source of architectural stimulation for the industrial man." [3]

From this mixture of functional necessities, materials and climatic conditions, creativity developed over time variations of functionally and aesthetically correct architecture that fascinated us increasingly in the past decades.

Bernd and Hilla Becher also collected from early on old commercial photographs of the factories they photographed and, by doing so, came across the terse photographic style of the early industrial photographers from where they consciously adopted certain features: the all-embracing view, if possible from a somewhat elevated position (Bernd Becher reports that the factories in the Siegerland were usually located in valleys so that this panoramic view could be easily created because of the typography), the accentuation of the functional parts of the architecture and not of human work, the deliberately chosen undramatic grey sky with its uniform light and lack of shadows, the depth of focus in the details, etc.

It was the very same fascination that motivated certain architects and designes in the twenties to include these sober and precisely photographed buildings for the first time in their publications as examples of important architecture. These buildings attracted the interest of the first modernist generation, especially of Walter Gropius, Erich Mendelsohn or Le Corbusier, mainly because these "anonymous architectures" had not been created on the basis of a universal architectural concept, but because their forms were apparently the result of their function and because they had been generally created by the engineers and owners of the factories themselves. This non-architecture became the source for new ideas and, at the same time, the basis of their own architecture - something that could be compared to the Cubists' discovery of African sculpture. This "primitive" non-architecture was represented by Mendelsohn in his large-format book with the title "Russia - Europe - America" with its impressive "architectural cross-section": Power plants with their high-tension poles, granaries of large cubic volumes, water towers, corn silos: The rational

production process unites the individual elements - silo compartments and distribution bridge, suction device and respective mechanics - to perfect order, to a visible representation of the productive will."[4] In 1926, Le Corbusier begins his main work "Kommende Baukunst" (Towards a new architecture) with a pair of pictures that illustrate this train of thought: on the left, the bled-off illustration of the three building units of the place in front of the cathedral in Pisa, on the right, a view of the three pillars of the grain silo, followed by seven other representations of massive Canadian and U.S. silos and the distinct referral in the introduction: "Engineering aesthetics, architecture: Both are basically one and the same and alternate with one another; today, the first is unfolding, the other one is in a state of embarrassing decline."[5] The photographs that demonstrate this unusual stance, are reproduced in a matter-of-fact style with an evenly grey sky and three-dimensional, powerful forms, so that in certain cases one thinks of retouching. This, however, has been part of the normal repertory of architecture photography up to this very day, used to emphasize the importance of each object in a more isolated and more effective fashion.

These somber photographs Le Corbusier used have a lot in common with those of Bernd and Hilla Becher, which is not the case with those often quoted prints of Albert Renger-Patzsch, the great realistic photographer of the twenties, whose industrial photographs are usually characterized by dramatic lines and bleeds. His other motifs include clear, sober overall views which Renger-Patzsch likes to compose in precise symmetry.[6]

The Bechers draw their actual inspiration from anniversary publications of companies which they collect, where the factories and municipal service plants that expanded or, at least, changed over time present an exact replica of an architecture that changes parallel to its changing functions. While dealing with this "primitive architecture", they supply not only information about renewed operational procedures within a plant or factory, but their appearance and form make company correlations and connections visible that go beyond national borders. However, we do not want to concentrate here on whatever important accomplishments Bernd and Hilla Becher achieved with regard to the economic history of Europe and the United States; better qualified persons will do so. In the meantime, competent persons in all the major companies have also started to get active and to assess their own history with the help of existing documents and records so that the work of Bernd and Hilla Becher can be put, within the economic and technical-scientific context, on a broader and broader basis, and their documentation often becomes the concluding chapter of a long development, just before it disappears.[7]

This first occupation with and documentation of functional production processes was denoted in 1967 in an exhibition at the Neue Sammlung Munich with the descriptive title „Industriebauten 1830–1930 – eine fotografische Dokumentation" (Industrial Buildings 1830–1930 – A Photographic Documentation), a first definition of the work of the Bechers whose aim was to "document" the buildings. After their first solo exhibition in Johannes Cladersʼ new municipal museum in Mönchengladbach in 1968 had kept them within the contextual boundaries of the artistic avant-garde, their works were incorporated a year later in the Leverkusen exhibition "Konzeption - Conception", where they depicted, on the first page of the catalogue, four comparable views of four high-tension poles and, on the following four pages, the development of one of these objects. This became the basic pattern for the way they represented their work in group exhibitions (as it is the case with the current one as well, almost a quarter of a century later!). Another variation was used in the catalogue of the Düsseldorf avant-garde exhibition "prospect 69" where selected artists, in addition to the galleries that had been invited, were represented with a large, full-page picture.

How can we understand this jump, what had happened? What, it was to ask a tieghly simplified question, converted industrial documentation so rapidly into a work of art? The short answer: the creation of photographs that conform with the typology, and the "zeitgeist" of Minimal/Conceptual Art, as it was enthusiastically described by Carl Andre in a text on the Bechers in December of 1982 in an important US art magazine.[8] First, the solo exhibition of their works at the Düsseldorf Kunsthalle was to be called "Objekte Fotografie" (Object Photography), in contrast to the then popular "Subjective Photography" that was promoted by Otto Steinert in Essen. But then, "Anonyme Skulpturen" (Anonymous Sculptures) was chosen, after Wend Fischer had written in a review about "anonymous industrial buildings". The Bechers were more interested in „anonymity as a stylistic principle" than in a reference to art.[9] The "Kunst-Zeitung Nr. 2"[10] got the bright red title "anonymous sculptures", but this referral to the industrial objects as artistic sculptures was also an easily misunderstood auxiliary construct, and not at all in the interest of the Bechers, but which was adopted by an art scene that favored minimal and technically perfect, factual objects within the art scene as well. However, the Bechers aimed at something different, something that would go beyond art, but would fit equally well into the discussion about art of that time: in the text for the large-format, excellently printed "Kunst-Zeitung", Bernd and Hilla Becher write: "The photos of the cooling towers are part of a collection that includes similarly understood sequences of pithead gear, water towers, gas-holders, blast furnaces, lime kilns, silos, oil pumps, high-tension posts, mineral processing plants, and oil refineries. These objects have in common that they were built without pondering about scales and ornamental grids. Their aesthetics consists in the fact that they were created without any aesthetic intention. For us, this topic has become so fascinating, because these buildings that share principally the same functions, appear in a multitude of forms. We attempt to put them in order with the help of photography and to make them available for comparisons."

Thus, the final principle of their work developed: they not only photographed complete factory premises and, thus, documented a certain moment in time, but the specific views of certain objects had to be photographed in a similar, i.e. comparable fashion. That is why the double pages of the "Kunst-Zeitung" are filled with their relatively few different, but, therefore, so precisely comparable cooling towers from the Ruhr Valley: first eight tall, then four wide cooling towers. The 1971 exhibition in the Aachen "Gegenverkehr - Zentrum für aktuelle Kunst" (Two-way Traffic - Centre for Contemporary Art) already had a title that cannot be mistaken: "Vergleiche technischer Konstruktionen" (Comparisons of Technical Structures); the "functional descriptions" and the data of the objects that are exhibited and shown in print are always precise and informative, up to the year of their construction, and are accompanied by exact map references. This has been the case until today. Thus, we already find in 1971 the "comparison: 2 pithead gear of the same design, 3 views of each. Diagonal scaffolding, English design, steel." With the help of several photos, the objects are seen from two, sometimes three sides, which makes the comparisons possible. This leads in 1971 to a group of 24 different pithead gear that, however, were all seen from only one position. For this, Bernd and Hilla Becher coined the decisive expression that describes their work probably in the most precise way: Typology of industrial buildings.[11]

Perceptions from quite different artistic areas met here: the dissociative tendencies of the artist with his individual, emotionally determined idiosyncrasies; the accumulation of everyday objects; serialization as an artistic principle; and the minimal change in variation sequences - here, parallel strands of an art, spanning from Marcel Duchamp to Conceptual Art (just to mention Hanne Darbovenʼs hand-written lines or Niele Toroniʼs brush prints), merged with the kind of art that is made up of the collectors' obsession with ordinary objects, despite the vastly different approaches, as with Christian Boltanski or Daniel Spoerri and his rows of glasses and knives. That body movements, performances, or the flow of time were documented around 1970 with the help of photography and regarded as independent fields of art, can be mentioned just by mentioning names like Jan Dibbets or Klaus Rinke. However, the most important impulse came probably more from scientific photography and its series of experiments - just to mention artist-researchers like Muybridge or Marey, whose photo sequences illustrated the body movements of animals and humans, because things that can hardly be differentiated because of their apparent similarities can be recognized as different when directly compared. The individual thing is not as important as its difference from the other. The photo-typologies of Bernd and Hilla Becher fit exactly into the discussion of the avant-garde with its sober and scientific attitudes. Thus, the title of the Aachen catalogue no longer includes one more monumental photograph, as it used to be the case, but already a group of three pithead gear that were to be compared. This precise, exact kind of observation, the didactic serialization of equally large things makes the typology possible: "A typology in the sense that it differentiates basic or model forms that can be visually and conceptually emphasized, is always the elementary part of the sciences that starts with ordering the multitude of the materials," says the definition in the Brockhaus [encyclopedia]. What is particularly individual is to become apparent in the differentiation with the typical - and, thus, needs to stress what is singular in the humans as well as in nature. With regard to Bernd and Hilla Becher's works, two examples are mentioned again and again: August Sander and Karl Blossfeldt. "Sander didn't photograph people, but types of people," Kurt Tucholsky recapitulated."[11]

Sander photographed people without a pose („countenance of the time"), without a specific gesture, preferably standing in a face-to-face position, quietly and factually. That way, however, they are differentiated by their posture, their facial expression, their clothes and environment. But Sander did not take the systematized objectification through the photographic medium as seriously as the necessity "to present an absolutely faithful image of our time."

Karl Blossfeldt, on the contrary, represents with his book "Urformen der Kunst - photographische Pflanzenbilder"[12](Primitive Forms of Art - Photographic Images of Plants) even more an example for the work of Bernd and Hilla Becher: In front of an evenly grey-green background (all 120 tables are made in the expensive copper gravure technique), the plants are symmetrically ordered and shown from the front, so that the artists of the avant-garde enthusiastically talked about "the great visions of a sculptor" and invited him, for example, to the exhibitions at the Bauhaus in Dessau.[13]. However, it is not so much the seemingly close relationship between the photographs and sculpture, that makes them comparable, but rather the sober working method of the photographer whose information in his descriptions are similarly precise as the ones of the Bechers: „Cassiope tetragona. Plant of the heath family, 12 times enlarged," and this plant is shown in two different enlargements, but in the same enlargement scale and together on one page, so that the reader can closely study the differences of each plant. For that reason, the photographic technique has to be used precisely and factually, is similar conditions have to be adopted in order to create something that is comparable in its reproduction. At the same time, black and white is better than colour, since "these objects have very little colour, their environment, on the contrary, quite a lot: the green of the meadows and the blue of the sky; the middle usually turns out as a black hole," the Bechers write.[14]

Life is thousandfold, the changes of men are thousandfold. The knowledge that

the hidden creative forces, into whose ups and downs we are roped as beings that are created by nature, govern everywhere with the same regularity - in the works that each generation creates as a parable of its existence as well as in the most transient, most fragile creations of nature - is far more delightful than the aesthetic experience." These sentences, written by Karl Nierendorf in his Blossfeldt introduction, can be applied to the works of Bernd and Hilla Becher, because not just the photo-technical approximation of the sculptural objects that were included, can be compared, objects that exist otherwise far apart from one another, in the most different countries and contexts, under highly different skies and in unlike landscapes, in opposite social and economic contexts. Just because of this likeness of there production principles of their exterior appearances, which causes the Bechers to re-photograph already photographed objects - because, for example, trees no longer obstruct the view or a higher position has become possible -, the object acquires something of its individual life-form. The more comparisons are possible, the more the singularity of this seemingly generally repetitive form comes through, which is so obvious in a purely functional fashion. This "nomadic architecture" - as Bernd Becher once said - mirrors simultaneously its connection to time, its change through functional transformation, and its end with "the relinquishment" of its function.

These technical buildings are created like living creatures, and they change over time in order to degenerate rapidly and to disappear. When it comes to the Bechers, one feels a loving attitude towards these objects, not because of their sober way of portrayal, but exactly because of the intensive attention they pay to the objects of a world that is approaching its end. Bernd Becher once stated to this effect: "The idea is to create families of objects" [15], and he talked about a humanization" of the objects that happens to the things because of their changing function. "And just as it is the case in nature, these objects eat one another; the old type of a plant is being eaten up by its younger brother."[16]. In the beginning of the seventies, these typologies continued to be extended up to 24 examples; however today, the Bechers feel that this kind of extension bears the danger that the individual is going to be reduced to a decorative part of the whole. Therefore, 15 parts usually constitute the whole, and for quite some time, they have been framed individually. Bernd and Hilla Becher call the few exceptions outside of those groups of works "picture stories"; there they portray only one plant in complete abundance, such as the plant Gute Hoffnung, the mine Zollern 2 in Dortmund-Bövinghausen, or the coal mine Hannibal in Bochum-Hofstede with its series of 96 photographs that was shown in the 1989 Cologne exhibition "Bilderstreit" (Iconoclastic Controversy). Asked about their style, their selection criteria, the Bechers answer: „The interrogation of the object, composition in favor of the object, light in favor of the object. The selection is subjective, the object has to make itself known, it must be possible to photograph it, what remains cannot be put into words." [17] But we can see it!

The year 1976, when Bernd Becher was appointed to the Düsseldorf art academy, is of special importance for our exhibition. Since it is not possible, according to the regulations of the German academies, to appoint two persons as professors [to the same position], even when they are married, only one part of the inseparable team was appointed; but the students did not just get the opportunity to enter a photography class between the appointments of Klaus Rinke (1974) and Nam June Paik (1979), but they got - and all members of the class stress this - stimulating, and in their humanity exemplary instructors who were familiar with the arts scene. When asked what they teach their students, Bernd and Hilla Becher answer tersely: "Exhibitions, books," with which they insinuate that it is necessary to be widely informed and that one has to deal with the most inclusive concept of culture, its historic beginnings included. The Bechers want their "students" to "pursue their subjects systematically and consistently" and "that they find their subjects themselves." [18]

A certain teaching attitude becomes obvious from these sparse remarks: to examine several topics systematically and to work on them invariably. The Bechers' influence on their students not only can be seen in their works, but also in their intellectual and way of teaching their exemplary life as alert contemporaries and socially responsible artists.

In 1976, Candida Höfer, Axel Hütte and Thomas Struth entered their class, very different personalities with different goals. Then, Andreas Gursky, Thomas Ruff, and Petra Wunderlich arrived, and in recent years the younger members in our selection, Simone Nieweg and Jörg Sasse. Of course, one could go much further, and the Bechers have not yet retired from teaching. [19]

All photographic works are connected by certain shared principles, despite their different authors: The photographs represent clear, not manipulated views of the artists' immediate environment. They show society's social forces in its streets, buildings, and interiors, in details of their homes, in their social bonds as families or individuals. Andreas Gursky refers to Roland Barthes: "To go into the centre means to confront social truth." And this center is not placed with monuments, stars, or special events but in everyday anonymity; we find the true declarations about the state of our society in its forms of normalcy. Thus, the subjects of this exhibition merge, for one because they are not separate pictures, but bundled to sequences, groups, complexes, sometimes more rigorously, then more associatively. Only few work-groups of their students show the same rigorous typology, with which the Bechers compare minimal differences: Thomas Ruff's sequence of frontally photographed heads of adolescent friends are formally comparable as are the centred, frontal, statue-like family portraits of Thomas Struth. All the others limit their work to certain chosen parameters, but not strictly in the sense of comparison typologies. Connected with it is that all artists pay explicit attention when it comes to the separate framing and the grouped hanging of their works, so that one can often talk about an installation for a specific room. The room in the photograph and the room where the photograph is presented are related to one another: the point of sight in the photograph and the point of sight of the viewer have a special mutual relationship in the works of all the artists: another social component can be found here: the viewer is included as an intelligent, thinking, or, on the basis of his associations, empathizing part of the photo. The photographs never refer to voyeuristic tendencies of the viewer, but are enlightening and analyzing; they represent the historical insights and social behaviors of our time, because the artist did not arrange those in the photographs but reproduced them as he had found them, and this as objectively as possible: the streets, the plazas, the gardens, the churches, the subway stations, the museum rooms, but the people as well. Not one of the Becher students changes the rooms he enters; he does not wish to interfere, he wants to document: a fleeting moment, connected with certain details that are emphasized from within the course of time.

This record of passing situations, the course of everyday events, these frozen moments that are of as little historical relevance as was Brandt's prostration in Warsaw, seem to be already part of he past the moment we notice them: just as the Bechers had to experience (and this was one of the significant reasons to change from the slow drawings to the much faster photographs) that the industry in the Siegerland disappeared from about 1955 on, so that by 1965 hardly anything was left - when in 1985 the book with the "pithead gear" was published, more than half of the 160 objects had been torn down and only one fourth was still in use - so do their students: Struth portrays buildings of the fifties, Ruff and Sasse interiors of the passing world of everyday knick-knacks and the charm of eat-in-kitchens, Hütte the re-modelled Berlin subway stations, Höfer the soon modernized museums, and Nieweg the lovingly laid-out little gardens at the outskirts of the cities.

We do not have to underscore that they all work without the artificial help of serious lighting or other manipulations. This world portrays itself, preferably at times of a certain stillness and concentration. The peacefulness of the places is not artificial or emotional, such as in Chargesheimer's frighteningly devastated, expressively ravaged views of an emptied-out "Cologne at 5:30 a.m.," but leaves room for self-representation. Thus, for example, Ruff and Struth allow their characters to choose their background colour or their position after additional conversations, in order to convey as little of the presenters subjectivity as possible, but a lot of the objects that are represented. This is combined with a slow shooting process that eliminates snap-shots: just as it is the case with the Bechers, their average photo has a statistically determined exposure time of 10 seconds with an aperture of 45; Struth sometimes overexposes for more than one second, and Höfer has to overexpose so much, for example in the dark interiors of museums, that he risks blurred photos in order to convey the details adequately. This asks for stillness and concentration on the side of the viewer, demands that seem to be unusual for today's video-clip generation.

For all the professionalism, the Bechers realize in their work or teach, one aspect remains important for me with regard to them as well as their students: the still fresh view of the curious person who can distance himself from the events but who wants to get close to them: "Unbewußte Orte" (Unconscious Places) was the title of one of Struth's books that showed precisely defined streets. For all the exactness of the names, dates, etc., something anonymous and therefore transferrable remained in there presentations of all of them. The "dilettante with a new vision of the old," this is how they might be best differentiated from the professional photographer of the advertising industry and the photo journalist, since the clever, effective arrangement of a light artist like Irving Penn or the psychologically analyzing portrait of an Anne Leibowics, that already asks for a definite interpretation, work here as the exact opposite pole. Just as the Bechers found the "amateurish" photographs of the advertisement pages of the anniversary publication of industrial companies stimulating because of their "different" aesthetics, so the younger photographers learned not only from the few important older photographers (especially August Sander is mentioned here, sometimes also Atget and Evans), but also - aside from the Bechers - from artists who are as photographers „dilettantes", such as Ed Ruscha who published two related photo books that were contrary to the ideas of photography as well as the art of their time: "Twenty-six Gasoline Stations" presented in 1962 (without a preface, just with the precise title) 26 grey, partially blurred photos of 16 gas stations that had been shot from a car across the street; "The Sunset Strip" combined in 1966 more than 100 similarly consciously made "unprofessional" photos as an almost limitless collage[20]: an exposing, amusing, sociological, exactly dateable, not repeatable document! Thomas Ruff put it in words while answering another question: "It is very consciously an imitation of conventional photography and it looks conventional."[21]

To sum up, I would like to stress once again that all the artists of the Becher class work with subjects, that deal with the public and social reality, without postulating it in an obvious fashion. This can be explained on the basis of the far-reaching interests of Bernd and Hilla Becher who expect from their students an extensive dialogue about cultural history and who send them on their way with a historical conscience, a sense of responsibility. When looking at the pictures or reading the texts and interviews of the artists, it becomes apparent that the students in the Becher classes think at the same time differently about pictorial truth, the

photographic image, questions of authorship, and one's existence as an artist than this is the case in many classes of German academies. The images of the computerized, synthesized media seem to be realistic even when completely manipulated; this is why these artists try to allow the objects to unfold and to convey in a precisely selected form to the viewer, whom they take seriously, something of the conflicting nature of the approach to the pictures of our environment.

P. S. Here, finally, it has to be said that similar things can be found outside of the Becher class. Artists like Wilhelm Schürmann in the seventies and Roland Fischer in the eighties are examples for it.[22]

The individual artists

Candida Höfer (born in 1944 in Eberswalde) was already a trained photographer - after an apprenticeship with a distinguished Cologne photographer, she had studied at the Cologne Werkschule and collaborated in the reconstruction of the Daguerreotype at the photo studio of Werner Bockelberg in Hamburg – when she entered in 1973 the film class of Ole John at the Düsseldorf Art Academy, who made socially relevant documentaries. Her major topic at that time was – aside from her work for the media which she disliked – the life of the Turkish guesworkers in the Rhineland. However, at the end of the seventies, she found her real topic which she realized not with the Becher-like seriousness of black-and-white photography, but rather with a small camera at 200 ASA and in colour: interiors of public buildings, mostly museums, institutes, organizations. The importance and past of these places become evident in the segmenti Candida Höfer selects; however, it is not the "official" view, but rather an atmospheric, often a seemingly more incidental one. She rarely elects a symmetrical picture parallelity, but rather an intuitively chosen diagonal; slightly diagonal lines accentuate the architecture, create a feeling of space. Even the early photographs, such as the interiors of pubs with their gambling machines that were shown in the Bonn "Schlaglichter" (Highlights) exhibition, seem to be more influenced by the past than by the present. Part of it is the daylight that seems to be the clandestine underlying theme of Candida Höfer's photographs; she prefers rooms, flooded by daylight, where the sun is reflected from polished floors and walls. She chooses this light not to portray something dramatic, but rather as a kind of reflected glory of the time that passes in these rooms which might have seen splendid times but seem now deserted. The play is over, but the lights are still on – for whom? – Candida Höfer makes us ask. All her works are connected through some standstill and contemplation, be it in the Mannheim residence or in the former Russian parade room in Karlshorst or the history-laden, but here less talkative room in the Caecilienhof in Potsdam where the separation of Germany and Europe had been decided that lasted for almost half a century.

Axel Hütte (born in 1951) entered the Becher class also in 1976 after having studied sociology at the University of Cologne and simultaneous studies at the Düsseldorf Art Academy. His subjects have remained the same: the anonymous rooms of the public spaces of our big-city architecture that have already eaten themselves into the landscape. Almost always presented as bleed, the monumental detail solidifies constructively with the right-angled lines of the picture format. Already in 1980, he showed the banal anonymity of public transportation architecture (trains stations, office corridors, staircases) in Germany with their seemingly functional design of wipe-clean tile walls, large grids, glass blocks, and cold neon tubes. Contrary to these photographsthere is the series of grand Italian buildings with pillars, arches and portals (such as "San Nicolo da Tolentini") which are seen in the bleed. Here too, the places are deserted and the time unspecified, somewhere between day and night, between past and present, even though a large clock might somehow give you the exact time: they still seem to be in use but, at the same time, they are no longer there. In several recent works with powerful colours, he puts with almost hyper-realistic precision the name of a subway station into the centre: Gesundbrunnen. This word, which is charged with so much mythical meaning, is framed by two views of this train station. The reality of this renovated and somewhat lustrous, but nevertheless banal train station is heightened by its presentation as a tryptic. In it, the factual and the meaningful, the past and the present become a unit whose effect the viewer has to decipher himself.

Thomas Struth (born in 1965 in Geldern on the Lower Rhine) is the youngest of those students, who entered Bernd Becher's class in 1976 and who is represented here. He started as a painter and has, as he says, "sufficiently tried out all the visual techniques that exist"[23]and, therefore, first found an ideal teacher in Gerhard Richter. In 1975, he put up a block with 2.8 x 2.8 photographs of views of Düsseldorf street scenes and became more and more fascinated by city scenes. He is more interested in what is to be represented than in the representation itself; city architecture is better photographed, this is why he gives up painting. He sees the beginning of his works in 1878 with views of empty New York streets, photographed right from the middle of the street at eye level. Those are "photographs that are especially typical for the individual cities and are supposed to visualize in this context the structure of their various areas," he writes in 1980.[24] However, the system he followed in the beginning dissolves, and Struth starts using colour as well for his characterizations of a city. We see the communal spaces, the places, facades and street of Düsseldorf, Munich, Tokyo, New York, Edinburgh, Rome, Paris. His views of German cities reflect something limited, sad, shy.
From 1985 on, ensuing from what started out as a "thank you" to friends, he creates - parallel to these „Unbewußte Orte" (Unconscious Places), the title of a publication of the street scenes - "portraits" of generally entire families, sometimes of couples, and rarely of individuals. Here, Thomas Struth appears circumspect in a similar fashion: the persons position themselves; relaxed and quietly, they look at us. Seen slightly from below the eye level when standing and from above when sitting, always in a centred position, well lit, if not illuminated, but nevertheless exposed for a long time, usually for about one second, the portrayed persons wait - and we, the viewers, are fascinated, look the stranger into their eyes, start communication and find mutual connections between those in the portrait and between them and us. Each person is different, and nevertheless we always find something that allows us to connect it with already known things; seen in that fashion, the "portraits" of the streets are the case, the environment, the social field where the members of the family and group portraits meander. Here, too, not only the individual sequences of the subjects make sense, they complement one another.

Andreas Gursky (born in 1955 in Leipzig) started in 1984, one year before he entered Bernd Becher's class, with "landscape pictures". Until 1988, these photos remained relatively small, at least for the many things that are shown in them. Among those chosen for this exhibition, he is surely the one, whose can be shown individually and do not necessarily coalesce to a sequence. He presents overlapping selection criteria, which could be called stylistic characteristics as well: the view over wide spaces where people often disappear in the masses like ants. They are usually seen from above like the Dutch paintings of the 17th century, those overall landscape views and Breughel's scenes, where usually moral Christian themes were usually shown in small scenes. Only on second view we see that the horizon is nevertheless blocked and that the view reaches far, but not into the distance. Thus, the ships and containers block the view in „Genua", we look at the accumulated cars of the ones who travel to distant places.
Since 1988, Gursky has been enlarging his pictures to formats up to two metres. These pictures, however, show a lot more restraint in the narrative; the world seems to have come to a standstill, as in "St. Moritz" where, despite of the stupendous view from the window, the white of the exterior world dazzles away the reality that lies out there. Gursky's preference for powerful architecture with high pillars, stanchions or columns, and people that look comparatively small, can be found in the selections for this exhibition as well. They are usually anonymous buildings, concrete constructions that show more functional character than design – this as a reference to the Bechers, even though it is achieved with different contextual declarations and formal means: colour plays a special role, because people distinguish themselves from nature, industrial objects or architectural masses, no matter how small and lost they might be.
The throng of people sometimes even becomes an ornament, but the individual seems to keep its space, even when the theme seems to continue to be "Where we come from, where we go to", to use a title of Gauguin. Thus, a very personal statement of Andreas Gursky can be quoted here as the key, that proves, that the artist's vision becomes individually formative, no matter how factual and objective the concept for his work seems to be: "Last, not least, I would like to add a biographical note. I was a single child and can still remember my childish desire for safety within the community. It is therefore not surprising that I, again and again, make people the subject of my work, people who ask in their lingering existence for a collective meaning."[25]

Petra Wunderlich (born in 1954 in Gelsenkirchen) began as a painter and remained undecided for a long time whether painting or photography would be better suited to represent the expressive content of her world. Especially the American painters of a detached world of industries and metropolitan life like Charles Demuth or Charles Sheeler, who, himself, directed and photographed in 1920, together with Paul Strand, the movie "Manhattan", influenced the Becher class with their American "precisianism", and not just Petra Wunderlich.[26] Parallel to them, she experienced the possibilities of photography in the works of Walker Evans and made up her mind in favour of photography in 1979, whereby two subject areas out of her four work-groups occupy a central position: church buildings and quarries. The format of her works is (at least it has been until now, and she considers colour "sweet") small, even with the relatively large quarries so that the viewer is not impressed by the size of the photograph per se. The photo negative is always kept in the oblong format and not cut.
The viewer is supposed to find his view into the world of forms that the photograph shows, quietly and exactly: Churches, designed by people, in all their details, with columns, window frames, and pillars that were repeated and passed on for centuries. They are shown in detail, in bleeds and sections, as parts of a world whose form and meaning we seem to take for granted, so that we think we see something new when we allow ourselves to look at the details that emerge as three-dimensional. "Quotations from art history (memories) can be often found in my pictures,"[27]the artist says and refers also to the various discussions they had about classical paintings in Bernd Becher's class, whose values all of his students respect and consider stimulating. In the equally deserted quarries, nature unfolds its vivid creative force which man reclaims from it. What grew naturally and man cut artificially, but as a matter of fact, is united here - and within such a group of artists, one cannot help being reminded of the photographic works of Thomas Struth who photographed a long series of Ulrich Rückriem's sculptures that had been created from such quarries. Petra Wunderlich creates here such a tension between the anonymous sculptures that were simply cut by the workers of the quarry, and the structure of the grown stone, which is another anonymous sculpture.

Thomas Ruff (born in 1958 in Zell/Black Forest) has the widest spectrum of subjects among the artists represented in this exhibition, even though he always works in groups of works: "The individual picture has to function within the group

just as well as alone" and "I prefer sequences, because I make one after the other."[28] But all the groups have in common that the artist interferes very little and the objects seem to represent themselves. This might have still happened in a somewhat explorative manner in the "Interiors", which the artist considers his first work-group after 1979: They show details of apartments, strange segments of normalcy that are more impressive in their found reality than those environments that the artist staged himself, as in "L'empereur" of 1982, something Ruff soon abandoned again. These interiors of German apartments are at the same time the exteriors of the German character, and they display its ideas about colour and form and its desires, which Ruff gets to express themselves almost automatically.

After these approximately 30 interiors, Ruff created from 1984 on "Portraits", first (about 60) in a small, later in a gargantuan format: they have in common that the artist chooses the persons, he photographs, among his friends and acquaintances and that a certain kinship seems to connect the young people. "The selection is consciously made." [29]All are well lit, usually shown from the front, sometimes as three-quarter faces, just like on passport photographs, serene, without the artificiality of any staging, neither the "happy people" from advertisements nor the „unmasked" ones of photo journalism. As with the Bechers, not the special, but the customary is supposed to make these faces comparable in their individuality. When photographed in the small format, the person can choose the background among the coloured cartons, which Ruff supplies. With the large format, he prefers a bright white background since colour would be too telling. Ruff tries, "to get as close as possible to the reality, the model."[30]There are no tricks, everything is obvious - and, nevertheless, these persons drift off into an abstraction because these are photographic images whose reality consists in granularity, coloring, and distortions when the viewer approaches the shiny pictures in their broad frames from the side.

The artist's fascination with a reality is, in the sense of Duchamp and Cage, paired with his reservations – since he is the one who chooses, creates –, and it becomes even more evident in a group of about 30 works with the title "Stars": He enlarged found negatives of an observatory into the gigantic, so that the viewer loses himself in the universe, and sees the firmament with its bright and dissolving points, with its near and far stars as something that is eternally given, outside of any artist's manipulation. Rarely has a work of art of such intellectual, enlightening and, at the same time, even though not intentionally, emotional, metaphysical importance: Ready-made and as an image of the world, it represents reality, but not in a manner that we could understand it. The chosen newspaper photographs (400 works) and the new night photographs that remind of espionage as well as amateur photos, unlike the photograph and its reproduction, ask the picture that we see, in a once again different fashion, how much reality it contains.

Simone Nieweg (born in 1962 in Bielefeld) focused from the very beginning on photography and started her studies with Bernd Becher in 1984, immediately after the "orientation year" [the first year at the university, when students are supposed to familiarize themselves with the system and to make decisions about their final goals]. She dates her first independent work rom 1986, when she switched to colour photography. Her first series centred around the anonymous architecture of gardens: the self-made toolsheds, garden cottages, or pigeon houses. She then created photos of department stores and black-and-white city-scapes as well, but most impressive are the colour photographs of garden areas, „where people use the land that is at their disposal, free of the city planners' ideas about order, how to grow vegetables or to raise rabbits or doves. I find my motifs in those large, haphazard gardens and with those small farmers who are not into intensive cultivation methods." [31] This body of subjects describes more an ending culture in the borderland between the well-groomed gardens of the residential buildings and the wide fields of the farmers. She is fascinated by the working methods of the planters, which could be called primitive, by the piece of land that lacks the well-groomed appearance of the house gardens or the monumentality of mechanized agriculture. She deals, like all the Becher students, with unpretentious topics. Examples for her work are again Renger-Patzsch, Sander, but she mentionedr also Eugène Atget, Stephen Shore, and Michael Schmidt from Berlin ("Berlin-Wedding") who created with his dark black-and-white photographs an oppressive kind of a landscape photography of destroyed objects. The strictly composed lines of the patches make a clear composition possible that seems to be veiled by the color. "It fascinates me at times to make pictures that look as if they could have been created a hundred years ago," and she prefers to use color here as well because it does not create the kind of abstraction that is possible with black-and-white photography.

Jörg Sasse (born in 1962 in Salzuflen) first started to work in Becher's class at the Düsseldorf Academy of Art in black-and-white which seemed to be important for the composition of two-dimensional photographs. The strict organization of the picture area still had to be tested and not changed by the use of colour. Since these so closely examined objects from residential environments have such a strong life of their own, they have to be firmly bound together, which unfolds both the plasticity of the object(s) and the balance between them within the composition of the picture area. In his next step, colour became important, and Sasse set his mind on the colour changes in the reproduction that are accomplished by illuminating the object. This use of light plays an important role, not in order to change reality subjectively, but in order to reproduce his subjective impression of reality objectively on the color photo. All his pictures are separate pictures, relatively small, and their outer format always matches the object that is shown: The formats differ between an almost square 8:9 and 2:3 and are used diagonally or upright. In this context, he feels that it is also important that he can choose larger formats for especially large rooms in order to present the viewer with a general overview as well as detailed information. The installation and the independence of each individual photo are decisive for the artist, even with regard to these small details of the residential environment. Just as the object with its bled-off environment is looking for its format, Jörg Sasse finds his "found objects" already in existence in the apartments of strangers. He then transfers these life pictures into strict image forms, he creates abstractions. His titles like "W 88 - 02 - 03, Bad Salzuflen, 1988" are absolutely precise with the exact place and date, however, just because of these data, they ironically seem to describe more their opposite, i.e. timelessness: the design of the object as "terminus post quem", and the date, when the viewer sees it, as the „ante quem"; in between, anything is possible, and Sasse chooses often objects which we naturally consider devoid of time and place such as pot holders, garbage cans, garden hoses. „The kind of light and the density of the segment do not create a 'documentary' image, but a kind of test model for the visual phenomena of everyday reality and those associations that are or are said to be closely connected with these phenomena."[32]Here too, the artist sees the possibility to associate these seemingly anonymous objects that are neither artistically styled nor transitory in a decorative fashion, but only just everyday objects. Here, we are very close to the things that seemed to be so far away that we didn't even notice them.

Footnotes

1
The title of this exhibition and its text follows and varies predecessors:
Tenir l'image à distance. Montreal:
Musée d'Art Contemporain, 1989.
De Afstand. Rotterdam:
Witte de With, 1990
Der Klare Blick. Kunstverein Munich, 1990.
Aus der Distanz. Düsseldorf: Kunstsammlung des Landes Nordrhein-Westfalen, Düsseldorf 1991.
Since in each case, several [of our] artists participated in the exhibition, we would like to recommend these catalogues for additional information.

2
B. and H. Becher. In Kunst-Zeitung Nr. 2. Düsseldorf, January 1969.

3
Bernard Rudofsky.
Architecture without architects - An introduction to anonymous architecture.
New York 1964. – Quoted from the German translation, published by Residenz Verlag, Salzburg and Vienna 1989, no page number.

4
Erich Mendelsohn. Rußland–Europa–Amerika. Berlin: Rudolf Mosse Verlag, 1929, p. 200

5
Le Corbusier. Kommende Baukunst.
(Towards a new architecture). Stuttgart:
Deutsche Verlagsanstalt 1926, p. 3
and repeated on p. 5. The motto of the text is then the first sentence: "Architecture has nothing to do with 'styles'", p. 15

6
Die Welt ist schön. 100 photographische Aufnahmen. (The world is beautiful. 100 photographic shots). München:
Kurt Wolff Verlag, 1928.
Albert Renger-Patzsch wanted the title "Die Dinge" (The things), but it was changed.

7
The two volumes „Die Architektur der Förder- und Wassertürme" (The architecture of the pithead gear and water towers), written with H. Schönberg and J. Werth, and „Zeche Zollern 2, Aufbruch zur modernen Industriearchitektur und Technik" (Mine Zollern 2. Departure to modern industrial architecture and technique), with H. G. Conrad and E. G. Neumann, were such collaborations. They appeared as volume 13 and 34 of the series of the research project of the Fritz Thyssen Foundation, Study Group Art History, published by Prestel Verlag (Munich) 1971 and 1977.

8
Carl Andre. A note on Bernhard and Hilla Becher. Artforum (December 1972): 59.
reprinted in the catalogue of the
XIV Biennial Sao Paulo, 1977:
Bernhard and Hilla Becher. Typologien industrieller Bauten 1963–1975 (Typologies of Industrial Buildings), p. 7.

9
Bernd and Hilla Becher.
Answers to my questions of
6-10-1992, p. 5

10
Edited by Hans Kirchbaum and Eugen Michel, Verlag Michelpresse, Düsseldorf, January 1969.

11
August Sander. Antlitz der Zeit.
Munich: Transmare Verlag Kurt Wolff, 1930.
A short version of the exhibition "Kulturwerk in Lichtbildern: Menschen des 20. Jahrhunderts, eingeteilt in 7 Gruppen, nach Ständen geordnet und umfaßt ca. 45 Mappen" (Cultural work in slides: People of the 20th century, divided into 7 groups, ordered by professions and consisting of about 45 portfolios), quoted
in the catalogue "Vom Dadamax zum Grüngürtel - Köln in den 20er Jahren" (From Dadamax to the Grüngürtel - Cologne in the Twenties),
Kölnischer Kunstverein, 1975,
pp. 148–150

12
Karl Blossfeldt. Urformen der Kunst – photographische Pflanzenbilder. (Primitive forms of art - Photographic images of plants.) Edited and with an introduction by Karl Nierendorf.
Berlin: Verlag Ernst Wasmuth, 1928.

13
Quoted probably from Ernst Kallai and his book review Blossfeldt, in bauhaus, vol. III, no. 1, January of 1929, p. 27

14
Answers of Bernd and Hilla Becher
to my questions 10-6-1992.

15
Bernd Becher in a conversation, printed in Un'altra obiettività. Another objectivity.
Curated by J. F. Chevrier and James Lingwood.
Paris (Centre National des Arts Plastiques) and Prato 1989, p. 57

16
See footnote 15, p. 62

17
Bernd and Hilla Becher answering my questions, 10-6-1992, p. 7

18
Quoted from the answers to my questions to B. and H. Becher of 10-6-1992, p. 8

19
In May of 1992, an exhibition Becher-Class was shown at the Kulturbahnhof Eller in Düsseldorf with N. Borowsky, J. Bruns, C. Fährenkemper, C. Goedicke, M. Koch, C. Konrad, A. Lambert, K. Mayer, R. Müller, S. Schneider, S. Siévi, and M. Thode.

20
The one side of the Sunset Strip in Los Angeles from No. 8024 to 9176 on top of the pages of the book, the other side of the street, back to the intersection Laurel Canyon, at the bottom.

21
Thomas Ruff in an interview in
Katalog BiNationale. Kunsthalle Düsseldorf, Cologne: DuMont Verlag, 1988, p. 260

22
See: Exhibition „In Deutschland" (In Germany), Rheinisches Landesmuseum Bonn 1979, Kunstforum, vol. 41,5, 1980, „Dokumentarfotografie" and the exhibition catalogue „Einsamkeit - un sentimiento aleman" (Lonliness - a German feeling),
in the Fundacion „La Caixa", Madrid 1992.

23
Thomas Struth in answers to my questions of 9-20-1992, p. 1

25
Andreas Gursky in a conversation with Bernhard Bürgi in the catalogue Gursky, Kunsthalle Zurich. Cologne: Verlag Buchhandlung Walther König, 1992, p. 37

26
see especially Bernhard Schulz. „Made in America - Technik und Dingwelt im Präsizionismus "(Technique and the world of objects in precisianism) in the catalogue Amerika - Traum und Depression 1920/40 (America - dream and depression)". Exhibition of the NGBK in the Akademie der Künste Berlin 1980, pp. 72–137.

27
Petra Wunderlich in the answers to my questions
of 9-21-1992, p. 1

28
Thomas Ruff to my questions, 9-11-1992, p. 1

29
Thomas Ruff in an interview, Katalog BiNationale. Kunsthalle Düsseldorf. Cologne: DuMont Verlag, 1988, p. 261

30
Thomas Ruff in footnote 28, p. 1

31
Simone Nieweg in her answers to my questions of 9-11-1992, p. 2

32
Answers of Jörg Sasse to my questions of 9-16-1992, p. 3

1991
black-and-white photography
38 x 54 cm

Bernd and Hilla Becher
Bernd Becher
1931 born in Siegen
1947 –1950 Apprenticeship as painter and decorator in Siegen
1953 –1956 Studied painting at the Academy of Arts in Stuttgart with Karl Rössing
1957 – 1961 Studied typography an the Academy of Arts in Düsseldorf
1961 Marries Hilla Wobeser
1966 British Council stipend for six months
1972 – 1973 Visiting lecturer at the Academy of Fine Arts in Hamburg
1976 Professor for photography at the Academy of Arts in Düsseldorf
1990 Sculpture Award of the XLIV Biennial in Venice

Hilla Becher, born Wobeser
1934 born in Potsdam
Trained as photographer
Work as advertising and serial photographer
1957 Moves to Düsseldorf
1958 – 1961 Department of photography at the Academy of Arts in Düsseldorf established
Studies photography at the Academy of Art in Düsseldorf
1961 Marries Bernd Becher
1972 – 1973 Visiting lecturer at the Academy of Fine Arts in Hamburg
Both live in Düsseldorf.

1
Gas-Holder
Berlin-Schöneberg
1992
black-and-white photography
60 x 47cm

2
Winding Tower
Mine Zolder, Belgium
1991
black-and-white photography
60 x 47 cm

3
Cooling Tower
Mine Scholven, Recklinghausen
1992
black-and-white photography
60 x 47 cm

4
Water Tower
Recklinghausen
1978
black-and-white photography
60 x 47 cm

5
Aggregate
Coking Plant Heinrich Robert
Ruhr Valley 1987
black-and-white photography
60 x 47 cm

6
Gas-Holder
Wesseling near Cologne
1983
black-and-white photography
60 x 47 cm

7
Coal Storage Bin
Mine Hannibal, Bochum
1967
black-and-white photography
60 x 47 cm

8-16
Typology
Factory Halls
1991
Gang, consisting of
9 black-and-white photographs
each picture 31 x 40.5 cm

Simone Nieweg

1962 born in Bielefeld
1982 high school diploma
1983 begins her studies at the Düsseldorf Art Academy, from 1984 on photography with Bernd Becher, master student
lives in Willich near Düsseldorf

34
Savoy cabbage
(Steinhagen/Westfalen)
1990
colour photography
29 x 37 cm

35
Pumpkin
(Bielefeld-Brackwedel)
1990
colour photography
28.5 x 39 cm

36
Piece of Land with Turnips and Kale
(Steinhagen/Westphalia)
1990
colour photography
29 x 39 cm

37
String Beans
(Bielefeld)
1987
colour photography
29 x 37 cm

38
Leek Patch and Compost Heap
(Willich)
1991
colour photography
29 x 39 cm

39
Vegetable Garden
in the Settlement Schloßhofstraße
(Bielefeld)
colour photography
29 x 38.5 cm

40
Vegetable Garden
in Duisburg-Großenbaum
1991
colour photography
29 x 38.5 cm

41
Potato Field
(Willich-Schiefbahn)
1991
colour photography
27.5 x 39 cm

42
Cabbage Field
(Düsseldorf-Niederkassel)
1990
colour photography

Thomas Ruff

1958 born in Zell on the Harmesbach, Black Forest
Studied at the Düsseldorf Art Academy with Bernd Becher
lives in Düsseldorf

43
Stars
1990 03 h 44 m/ –45°
colour photography
201 x 134 cm

44
Stars
1990 07 h 28 m/ –45°
colour photography
201 x 135 cm

45
Interior
1983
colour photography
20.5 x 27.5 cm

46
Interior
1980
colour photography
20.5 x 27.5 cm

47
Interior
1980
colour photography
27.5 x 20.5 cm

48
Interior
1979
colour photography
27.5 x 20.5 cm

49
Interior
1979
colour photography
27.5 x 20.5 cm

50
Interior
1980
colour photography
27.5 x 20.5 cm

51
Interior
1982
colour photography
20.5 x 27.5 cm

52
Interior
1983
colour photography
27.5 x 20.5 cm

Jörg Sasse

1962 born in Bad Salzuflen
1982 – 1987 studied at the Düsseldorf Art Academy
1987 master student with Bernd Becher
lives in Düsseldorf

53
W-90-12-04
Bad Salzuflen 1990
colour photography
30.5 x 40.5 cm

54
W-88-02-03
Bad Salzuflen 1988
colour photography
30.5 x 40.5 cm

55
W-90-03-03
Main 1990
colour photography
40.5 x 30.5 cm

56
S-86-06-01
Düsseldorf 1986
colour photography
30.5 x 40.5 cm

57
W-86-02-02
Düsseldorf 1986
colour photography
40.5 x 30.5 cm

58
W-88-05-02
Ratingen 1988
colour photography
40.5 x 30.5 cm

59
W-90-02-01
Gießen 1990
colour photography
40.5 x 30.5 cm

60
W-90-07-01
Mettmann 1990
colour photography
30.5 x 40.5 cm

61
W-91-03-11
Bochum 1991
colour photography
30.5 x 40.5 cm

62
W-88-07-03
Mettmann 1988
colour photography
40.5 x 30.5 cm

Andreas Gursky

1955 born in Leipzig
1978 – 1981 Folkwangschule (GHS) in Essen
1981 – 1987 Düsseldorf Art Academy
1985 Master student of Bernd Becher
lives in Düsseldorf

17
St. Moritz
1991
colour photography
134 x 165.5 cm

18
Genova
1991
colour photography
130 x 165.5 cm

19
University of Bochum
1988
colour photography
99.5 x 138.5 cm

20
Train Station in Porto
1988
colour photography
112.5 x 134 cm

21
Paris, Beaugrenelle
1988
colour photography
57 x 39.5 cm

22
Zoobrücke (Zoo Bridge), Cologne
1988
colour photography
57 x 42 cm

Candida Höfer

1944 born in Eberswalde
1973 – 1976 studies at the Düsseldorf Art Academy
1976 – 1982 studies photography with Bernd Becher
lives in Cologne

23
House of the Employer, Cologne III
1990
colour photography
35.5 x 51.5 cm

24
DHFK Leipzig I
1991
colour photography
35.5 x 51.5 cm

25
Folkwang Museum, Essen
1982
colour photography
35.5 x 51.5 cm

26
Rotes Rathaus Berlin I
(Red City Hall Berlin I)
1991
colour photography
35.5 x 51.5 cm

27
Museum Karlshorst Berlin I
1991
colour photography
35.5 x 51.5 cm

28
Caecilienhof Palace Potsdam I
1991
colour photography
35.5 x 51.5 cm

29
Karlsruhe Residence
1991
colour photography
35.5 x 51.5 cm

30
Cafeteria Cologne
1991
colour photography
35.5 x 51.5

Axel Hütte

1951 born in Essen
1973 – 1981 Studied at the Düsseldorf Art Academy
1982 Stipend of the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) to study in London
1985 Stipend for the German Study Centre in Venice
1986 – 1988 Karl Schmidt Rottluff Stipend
lives in Düsseldorf

31
Gesundbrunnen
Berlin
1984
Triptych
of three colour photographs
together 90 x 260 cm

32
San Nicolo da Tolentini
1986
Triptych
of three colour photographs
together 90 x 260 cm

33
Balford Tower
London
1991
colour photography
166 x 110.5 cm

Thomas Struth

1954 born in Geldern
1973 – 1978 studied at the Düsseldorf Art Academy with Peter Kleemann, Gerhard Richter, and Bernd Becher
1978 New York stipend of the Düsseldorf Art Academy
1980 – 1982 Alternative national service for conscientious objectors
lives in Düsseldorf

63
Gotanda
Tokyo
colour photography
42 x 58 cm

64
Via Giovanni Tappia
Naples 1989
black-and-white photography
45 x 57 cm

65
North Garland Court
Chicago 1990
black-and-white photography
44 x 55 cm

66
The Ghez Family
Chicago 1990
colour photography
69 x 87 cm

67
The Bernstein Family
Mündersbach 1990
colour photography
76.5 x 103.5 cm

68
Tomoharu Murakami
and his wife
Tokyo 1991
colour photography
67 x 90 cm

Petra Wunderlich

1954 born in Gelsenkirchen
1975 – 1985 studied painting at the Ecole Nationale Superieure des Beaux-Arts in Paris
studied photography at the Düsseldorf Art Academy
1987 stipend of the Kunstfond Bonn
1988 Karl-Schmidt-Rottluff stipend
lives in Düsseldorf

69
Düsseldorf
1979
black-and-white photography
29 x 40 cm

70
Berlin
1984
black-and-white photography
40 x 29 cm

71
Berlin
1984
black-and-white photography
40 x 29 cm

72
Buca Canalgrande
1991
black-and-white photography
38 x 54 cm

73
Buca die Ravaccione
1990
black-and-white photography
38 x 54 cm

74
Giola
1989
black-and-white photography
34 x 48 cm

75
Giola Piastrone
1991
black-and-white photography
38 x 54 cm

76
Baccanaglia
1991
black-and white photograph
38 x 54 cm